

RESOLUTION NO. RS2018-1135

A resolution recognizing the Tenth Anniversary of the Nashville Cherry Blossom Festival and declaring April 2018 as “Nashville Cherry Blossom Festival Month”.

WHEREAS, the concept for Nashville’s annual Cherry Blossom Festival, or Sakura Matsuri, saluting the strong friendship between Nashville and Japan, was inaugurated in 2009 by Nashville’s first Consul General from Japan, The Honorable Hiroshi Sato; and

WHEREAS, Consul General Sato’s successors, The Honorable Motohiko Kato and The Honorable Masami Kinefuchi, have fully endorsed the Cherry Blossom Festival by dedicating financial assistance, human capital, and other resources to its growth; and

WHEREAS, since 2009, Nashville’s mayors -- including The Honorable Karl Dean, The Honorable Megan Barry, and The Honorable David Briley -- have also promoted the Cherry Blossom Festival through financial and in-kind participation, staff support, and providing the Metro Public Square as the location for the festival; and

WHEREAS, prominent Nashville business leaders Ed and Carole Nelson, Jack and Barbara Bovender, and Clay and Cathy Jackson have served as Honorary Chairs of the festival; and

WHEREAS, generous sponsors of the festival have included a range of Japanese and Tennessee businesses, including NISSAN, the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority, and the Bridgestone Americas Trust Fund; and

WHEREAS, the Japan-America Society of Tennessee, Inc. has been the lead organization overseeing all administration, coordination and logistics of the event; and

WHEREAS, Sister Cities of Nashville has partnered with the Japan-America Society of Tennessee to sponsor the festival’s opening event, the Cherry Blossom Walk, led annually by the current consul general, current mayor, and current Sister Cities board chair; and

WHEREAS, Kamakura, Japan became Nashville’s eighth sister city in 2014, a partnership that has led to annual exchanges between the citizens of Kamakura and Nashville promoting mutual respect and understanding; and

WHEREAS, one thousand (1,000) cherry trees have been planted throughout Nashville since the festival’s inception, fulfilling Consul General Sato’s 2009 vision to plant 100 cherry trees each year over the course of ten years; and

WHEREAS, attendance at the festival has grown exponentially, from 300 visitors in 2009 to an estimated 45,000 visitors in 2017; and

WHEREAS, performers and vendors at the festival, including country music singers and dancers from Kamakura, have contributed to a full range of Japanese and Nashville cultural and culinary delights; and

WHEREAS, the Nashville Cherry Blossom Festival, celebrating its 10th Anniversary at the Public Square on Saturday, April 14, is now the largest outdoor celebration of Japanese culture in the southeast – and it continues to grow each year; and

WHEREAS, the Cherry Blossom Festival was named Nashville’s “Best Family-Friendly Festival” by *Nashville Scene’s* “Best of Nashville 2017 Writer’s Choice” award.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council, on behalf of the people of Nashville, Tennessee, does hereby express its gratitude to all Japanese and Nashville citizens, corporations, and organizations involved in the Sakura Matsuri since 2009 for devoting innumerable hours and financial resources to growing a once small gathering of Japanese and Nashville friends to an annual festival that now brings together tens of thousands from many backgrounds for a shared international cultural experience.

Section 2. The Metropolitan Council, on behalf of the people of Nashville, Tennessee, does hereby recognize the deep friendship between Nashville and Japan symbolized by the delicate Sakura blossoms blooming annually on hundreds of cherry trees throughout our city.

Section 3. The Metropolitan County Council on behalf of the people of Nashville Tennessee, does hereby recognize and celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Nashville Cherry Blossom Festival by declaring April 2018 as “Nashville Cherry Blossom Festival Month”.

Section 4. The Metropolitan Clerk is hereby directed to send a certified copy of this Resolution to former Consul Generals Sato, Kato, and Kinefuchi and to Mrs. Ed Nelson, Mr. & Mrs. Jack Bovender, and Mr. & Mrs. Clay Jackson, as a means of thanking them for their leadership in promoting the deep friendship between Nashville and Japan by supporting so many initiatives, especially Nashville’s annual Cherry Blossom Festival. The Metropolitan Clerk is further hereby directed to send a certified copy of this Resolution to Kamakura's Mayor Takashi Matsuo and to the Kamakura-Nashville Friendship Association in thanks for their partnership over the years.

Section 5. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County so requiring it.

INTRODUCED BY:

Mina Johnson
Member of Council